

LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

JULY 1989

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Inclusivity

For Growth in Faith and Mission

JULY 1989

LUTHERAN
WOMAN
TODAY

VOLUME
NO.

FEATURES



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Lily R. Wu

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The Tyranny of Time *Steve Charleston*

A Tale from the Inner City
Barbara Jurgensen

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Editor's Notes

community of women shall be inclusive since in baptism God makes all people one in Christ, and shall have the object of proclaiming and maintaining this inclusive unity in the body together."

It is how, in our constitution, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have stated their commitment to live together in the body of Christ. The *shall*s in the statement make it sound like a command—but as in certain directives of the faith, we see the imperative of grace and invitation to a joyful life in Christ that cannot be described by the word "command".

This issue comes to help us link the imperative and the invitation to wholeness. As we all know, inclusiveness takes many forms—age, sex, level of education, geographic location and taste, language, and more. All are worthy of attention in our life together as believers. LWT has featured articles on several of these already and will continue to do so. The focus of this issue, however, is inclusivity.

If a focus may be dangerous, we agree. Dangerous because: if addressed, we may think the principle of inclusiveness is met, move on to the next principle. Some of us who live where there are people of color may feel, mislead, that we needn't be part of the challenge. Some of us who have felt the sting of another form of exclusion, or

who champion some other church concern, may be less sympathetic with the focus this month.

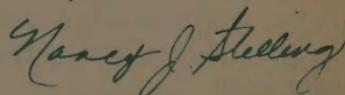
- The very real possibility exists that through these words God may touch our hearts and minds, causing us to change some of our thinking and acting. "Growth in faith and mission" can be difficult as well as exciting.

Perhaps the biggest danger is to give the impression that what is said in these pages is heavy, imposing, depressing.

Nothing could be further from the truth! For example, Steve Charleston, a Choctaw Indian, in "The Tyranny of Time" reminds us that we are called "to follow Jesus, not run past him." Likewise Lily Wu ("Inclusivity—Our Great Adventure") gives eminently practical helps on inclusivity that are infused with the joy of its possibilities.

Inez Torres Davis, a candidate from the recent multicultural writers workshop, reflects on the ELCA project in "A Vision of Wholeness." And excerpts from the "Living Waters of Faith" series aid our understanding of oneness in Christ.

We hope you find the issue "dangerously helpful," and we invite your response.



EDITOR

LETTERS

Waiting Room Ministry

I commend the idea of placing copies of LWT in waiting rooms ("Waiting Room Ministry," March 1989). That is a good way of sharing our gifts with others and filling some rather not-fun time in some often not-enjoyable places and situations.

However, my enthusiasm waned considerably and turned to disappointment with the suggestion that an evangelistic card be put in each copy placed. Why the need for the self-serving brochure? Let us rather simply give and share a gift with no strings attached.

*Lucy M. Radatz
Kensington, MN*

Honor Roll

The Women of the ELCA of Lutsen Evangelical Lutheran Church qualifies for the LWT Honor Roll—and more.

In addition to subscribing for every woman member of our congregation, approximately one-third of the 63 subscriptions which we pay for from our budget are for other women in the community interested in receiving the magazine.

*Alice Sjoding
Lutsen, Minnesota*

We gift our congregation's new ladies with a year's subscription to LWT. But concern for the better use of our dollars prevents us from presenting it to all ladies. World

Hunger makes better use of our donation than would giving the magazine to: the women whose minds only function minimally in their later years; the dual career women whose family time is so limited that they seldom have the opportunity to read *The Lutheran* (which is provided by the congregation); or the others who would accept [a gift subscription] in the spirit in which it was given. Thoughtful stewardship challenges us to find more creative avenues for our monetary offerings.

*Mary Ann Peters
Wittenburg, WI*

Receiving from the Poor

I want to comment on the April issue of LWT: Bueno!

We, the Hispanic community, marginalized and poor members of this "great family" need to let fortunate brothers and sisters know about us, and learn from us how to deal with pain and suffering and still hold faith that the best is yet to come.

As it is mentioned at the end of the article on spirituality: "Giving good news to the poor include receiving good news from the poor."

Ministering to the poor is a two-way avenue: it's giving and receiving. Unfortunately, some have not learned to receive as well as to give. It is only when giving is done in a non-paternalistic way that some can truly receive.

rs and brothers feel they are
g their part.

Josefina Nieves-Lebron
ELCA Commission for
Multicultural Ministries

Pregnancy Loss

Thank you for your May issue and article "Breaking the Silence; Pregnancy Loss." Jessica Crist said that many of us who have experienced the loss of a baby want to know that it is emotionally painful, it leaves scars that will not go away, that what people do and say make a difference in helping us understand that it is neither ourselves nor God who failed.

Pastors and church members need to be a great deal more sensitive to this issue. Hopefully, many of them will read this article before their next Mother's Day sermon, or when they ask all mothers to stand before corsages, or before forming a women's Bible study and discussion groups, and before assuming anything about a childless woman.

Ruthanne Henderson
Van Nuys, California

Book Review

I read the book *Born of the Sun* by Joseph Diescho [reviewed in the April LWT] and I was shocked by offensive language. The review should have mentioned this, as I believe not to put books with such language in our church library.

Jennie Olson
Webster, South Dakota

Please send comments to Letters, Christian Woman Today, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631. Direct subscription concerns to Augsburg Fortress, at the address listed on the inside front cover.

LWT Honor Roll

Congratulations to the latest LWT Honor Roll Congregations:

- St Peter's; Marble Falls, Texas
- Immanuel; Warren, Minnesota
- Lutsen Evangelical; Lutsen, Minnesota
- St. Paul; Volga, Iowa
- Nordland; Rutland, North Dakota
- Our Saviour; Buckeye, Arizona
- St. Paul's; Red Wing, Minnesota
- Ralph; Ralph, South Dakota
- Salem Evangelical; Brooklyn, New York
- Center; rural Mapes, North Dakota
- Gary; Gary, Minnesota

Honor Roll congregations are those in which all women in the parish subscribe to LWT. For more information, or to apply for honor roll status, write:

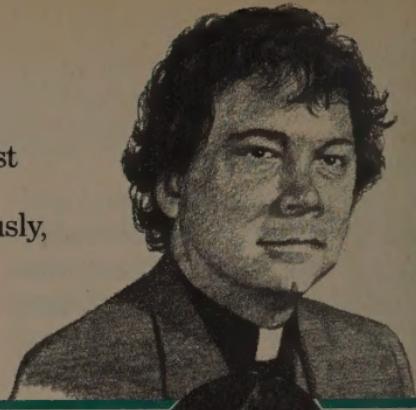
LWT Promotion
Box 1209
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Attn: Sandy Dahlin.

Bible study resource book available on audiotape

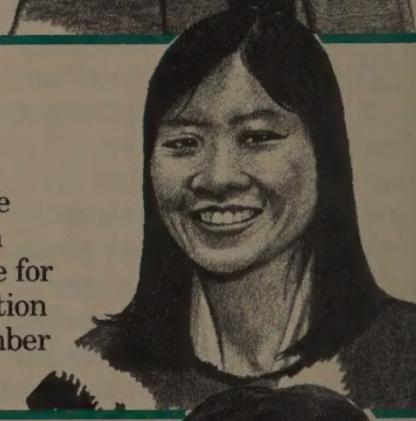
The Bible study resource book for *A Light to My Path: A Study of the Gospel of John* is now available on audiotape through the ELCA Braille and Tape Service for persons with visual or other physical disabilities. The cost of the one-tape set is \$4.00 (payable by check or credit card), which includes postage and handling. No code number is needed. Checks should be made payable to Augsburg Fortress. Orders may be directed to Augsburg Fortress Audiovisual Department, 426 South Fifth Street, Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

CONTRIBUTORS

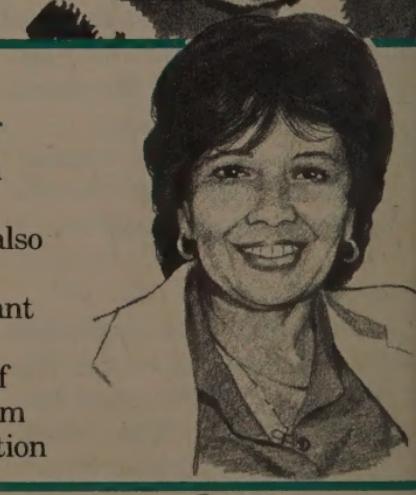
A citizen of the Choctaw nation of Oklahoma, **Steve Charleston** ("The Tyranny of Time") is an Episcopal priest on the faculty at Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. Previously, Father Charleston lived in Mobridge, South Dakota, where he worked in leadership development among Native Peoples for the Diocese of North and South Dakota.



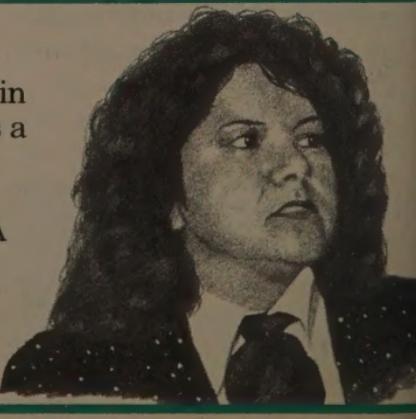
Lily Wu ("Inclusivity—Our Great Adventure") says that "all of us are needed" to make inclusivity work in the church, "not just Christians who live in multiethnic communities." An associate for communications at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Lily Wu is a member of Bethany Lutheran Church, Elmhurst, New York.



Carolyn Green, project coordinator of "Living Waters of Faith," has long been active in cross-cultural ministries. A former public-school counselor, Green also worked for the Lutheran Church in America. Now retired, she is a consultant for the ELCA's Commission for Multicultural Ministry and president of LEAP, Inc., a Washington, D.C. program of leadership, enrichment, and affirmation for inner-city males ages 9 to 11.



A member of Salem Lutheran Church in Flint, Michigan, **Inez Torres Davis** is a candidate in the ELCA's multicultural writers workshop for Asians, Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans. In "A Vision of Wholeness" she shares her reflections on the project. A Mexican-American, she serves as director of Salem's Learning Center, a tutoring ministry for young people.



Inclusivity

Our Great Adventure

Lily R. Wu

Star Trek. Star Wars. I love those science-fiction adventures in which man beings, along with creatures of other species, join forces to defeat a common enemy. Separately they are no match for the adversary. United they stand a much greater chance.

The togetherness doesn't come easily, though. One of the species usually doubts the abilities and loyalties of the others. But as they share their talents, they grow in mutual respect and care for one another. What a heartfelt victory it is indeed when they win the final battle, for they have won not only freedom and peace, but also each other as friends.

to Begin

There are many interesting parallels between this story line and our own venture with inclusivity in the church. To become more "inclusive," especially with people of color, we need to recognize:

Our allies. Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and others may not look, think, or act the same, but we are all on the same side, and each has gifts needed by all.

The adversary. Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American

people are not the enemy. White people are not the enemy. Our common enemy is found in wicked spiritual forces of the heavenly world (Ephesians 6:12, TEV). Our enemy is the devil (1 Peter 5:8, TEV).

3 Historical problems. U.S. history and current-day realities abound with examples of racism against people of color. Because we must spend so much energy in survival, protection and community growth, our efforts against the adversary are being diverted—to the

Inclusivity

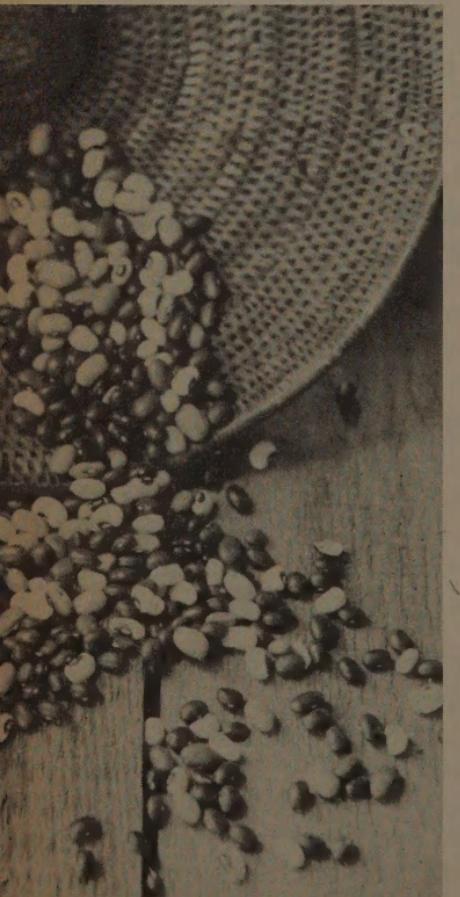
detriment of all. Even within the church, people of color are often considered outsiders rather than family members.

4 The plan. Inclusivity is our active response to an ongoing battle. It is our chance to organize to fight together on God's side. Conversely, lack of inclusivity gives greater power to the one who would divide and conquer us all, having us lose by default.

5 Our role in the plan. Inclusivity is not an optional ministry limited to Christians who live in multiethnic communities. All of us are needed. Collectively we make inclusivity come to life in our church and in our lives.

Inclusivity is our active response to an ongoing battle.... our chance to organize to fight together on God's side.

God's Call



God's word offers many examples of how we should relate to those who are different from ourselves. The Old Testament is filled with instructions on proper concern for strangers and sojourners. Exodus 22:21 (RSV) is just one example: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Non-Christians can look for friends just as easily as we can. Being hospitable to strangers is more distinctive of Christian.

The New Testament continues this theme, with Jesus as a role model for God's inclusive welcome. See John 4:7-42. Talk about racial/ethnic tensions! Jews and Samaritans didn't even speak to each other. Yet Jesus, a Jew, chose to speak to a Samaritan, and a woman at that, at the well.

Jesus constantly associated with people of all ages, of different races, classes, and walks of life. He treated every group and every person with the same concern, same standards. We in the church should do no less, because we are one in union with Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28, TEV).

Inclusivity

e, Lord?

do we even see a problem? We are ethnocentric people who prefer our own kind. We are also products of our society, which favors people who are educated, healthy, slender, cheerful, wealthy (not poor, at any age), young, good-looking, well-spoken in English, dressed, heterosexual, and White.

Many of us become adept at subtleties: blending in the crowd and letting somebody else welcome visitors at church; blaming other racial or ethnic groups for their problems; not doing anything constructive about the situation. After a while, we accept preconceived images, assumptions and derogatory remarks about others easily, forgetting how we would feel if we were in their shoes—and how these prejudices lead to unjust treatment.

Well, let's not give in to the ways of the world! We are called instead to foster inclusiveness, "a way of being that promotes wholeness in the midst of diversity and honors the distinctive gifts of all people."¹

Inclusive people Are . . .

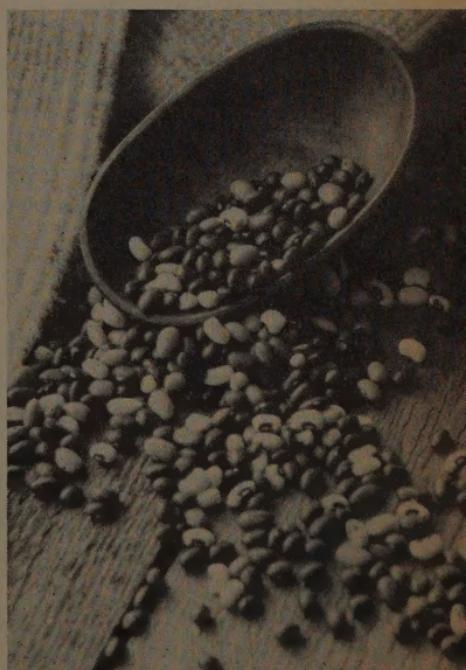
One very practical way to become more inclusive personally is to recognize the characteristics shared by inclusive people, and follow their example.

Here are some traits I have observed so far:

Inclusive women and men think "different" is interesting or just different, rather than inferior or threatening. Instead of accepting stereotypes and assumptions, they want facts and new awarenesses. They turn to God for help in dealing with any negative feelings they have about others. They view people of color, and those who speak a different language, as people, not as unwelcome competitors or burdens to their way of life.

They recognize people of color as

Inclusiveness is "a way of being that promotes wholeness in the midst of diversity and honors the distinctive gifts of all people."



¹ "Inclusiveness: A Way of Being," *Journal of the American Lutheran Church*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1984.

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sisters and brothers who already have a rightful place at God's table. They don't treat us as guests being allowed in if we assimilate well. Going beyond "we" and "they" thinking, they make decisions with, not for, others. They don't impose an existing approach that favors some over others. They present themselves as equals, which means they can be, at times, just as vulnerable as anybody else.

3. They are culturally sensitive. They show respect, even when they don't agree. They know that inclusivity does not mean giving up your culture. They don't minimize or shut out differences in perspectives, beliefs, customs, values and behavior. They choose, however, to emphasize commonalities rather than differences.

4. They see beyond the "entertainment value" of other cultures. Going beyond the foods, songs, dances, and colorful festivals, they learn about the customs, the preferred styles of decision-making, roles of family members, struggles and dreams of the people. They find out what is considered offensive, insulting, or painful to other people. Never do they poke fun at or trivialize people's feelings or concerns.

5. They connect inclusivity with other aspects of their lives. For example, some White women who have been hurt by societal discrimination use that sensitivity to better understand and support women of color in our struggle against discrimination.

6. They use the most sensitive language they are aware of, and allow people to name themselves. For example, they ask whether a person prefers to be described as Native American, Native or American Indian; if a person wants her severe arthritis referred to as a "disability" or a "handicapping condition."

Inclusive
people think
"different" is
interesting
or just
different,
rather than
inferior or
threatening



7. They practice reflective listening, that is, "Is this what I hear you say? Am I understanding correctly?" They listen to how something is said, not only what is said.

8. They take action for what they believe in. They don't wait for inclusivity to come to them. They take part in sister church arrangements. They become advocates for economic justice, social ministry, and antisexism, antiracism, antiviolence efforts.

9. They teach their children to be inclusive. They point out the racism in a TV sitcom, stop an offensive joke before the punch line, and seize other "teachable moments" to promote mutual respect.

The Gift

vity can be a source of help we never expected. Let me with you an experience I had. Valerie Estes and I were strangers two different worlds who met at a multicultural retreat in North Dakota. How impressed I was with her! She was tall and striking, with long, reddish-brown hair, she was strong, and confident. A mother of three had arranged for child care so she could come to the retreat alone. We had come together, and talked late into the night.

During evening worship by the Native Americans Valerie told us that her 95-year-old grandmother had passed away just a few weeks before. The shawl Valerie wore, in fact, had been given to her by her beloved grandmother's parting gift. And what a dramatically beautiful shawl it was—sky blue, with long gold fringes, and embroidered on the back with a large, colorful eagle.

Meeting all of you has been special to Valerie said. "But in the tradition of my people, I now want to honor one person in particular. I would like to give my shawl to Lily." I was surprised. That shawl was a cherished heirloom to offer a lifelong gift to not someone who had been a stranger the day before!

It was Valerie's openness that had made it easy to share thoughts, feelings and struggles with her. Here she was saying that my openness had been a gift to her.

I didn't tell you the other part Valerie smiled as she wrapped the shawl around me in the cool mountain air. "Everyone here has to

come up and honor you too." One by one, the congregation came forward to greet us, warming me with their smiles, handshakes, hugs and good wishes. I was overwhelmed by love, and could not stop my tears from flowing.

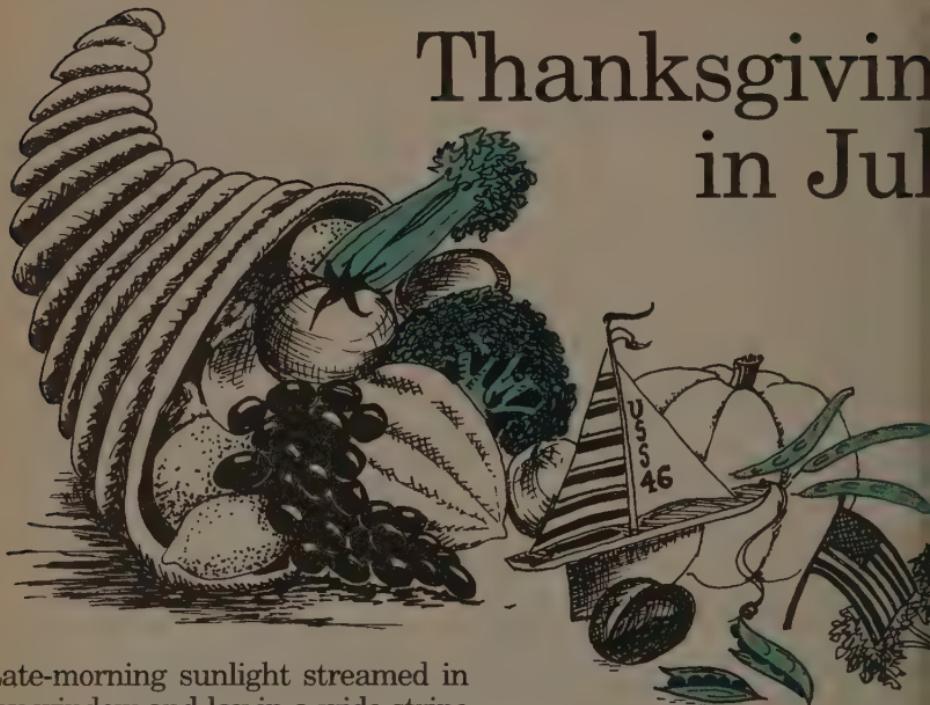
"Why did you do it?" I asked Valerie, afterwards. "Well, my grandmother taught me a lot about community, and about sharing," Valerie said. "She said that when you give away something that you really want to keep, that's when the gift has the greatest meaning."

I had planned to "learn" something about a different culture on this trip, my first visit to a Native American reservation. But God took me beyond that toward a deeper understanding. Valerie's shawl, a gift from her heart and from her Lakota traditions, gave me support and encouragement at a time when I needed it. God gave me a message of strength and hope through a woman from another culture.

God wants us to learn with both our hearts and minds, to have our roots and foundation in love, and to understand how broad and long, how high and deep Christ's love is (Ephesians 3:17-18, TEV). Let us discover together what it means to be inclusive. Let us praise God for having given us the gifts of each other, to share with the world in Christ's name. ■

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Thanksgivin in Jul



Late-morning sunlight streamed in my window and lay in a wide stripe across my bed. I stretched and leaned back into my pillow. A bird chirped in the tree outside my window. A yard or two away a lawnmower whirred as a neighbor tried to beat the afternoon heat.

It's going to be a great day, I thought, throwing back the sheets. I headed out to the kitchen to look for my husband, Tim, who had gotten up earlier. I spied him outside working in the garden. "How about lunch?" I called. He waved and nodded in agreement.

I quickly got dressed and began making lunch. I opened the refrigerator and took out some cold chicken left over from last night's dinner. I added two apples, some potato chips, and a couple of cookies for dessert. I picked up the plates and headed outside.

"Good morning, Sleepyhead!" Tim called. I sat down in the grass and watched him weeding around the to-

mato plants. Soon my thoughts turned to the day ahead. Should I call Di? Linda? Clean the house or go swimming?

"A day like today reminds me how much I have to be thankful for," said, interrupting my thoughts.

"What?" I asked, as I came out of my reverie.

"Working out here in the garden this morning and seeing what a beautiful day it is reminds me how much we take for granted," he continued. "When life's going great, we seem to forget to be thankful for what we have."

"I guess you're right," I said, thinking back over my morning. I had awakened to a beautiful day and was eating a hearty lunch with my husband—and I hadn't bothered to thank God for any of it.

"I think we need to make more time for God," Tim said.

ort to be grateful for what God
iven us," Tim said. "Got any
on how we can be more thank-

ring our lunch we came up with
al ideas, but it was one of Tim's
I liked the best—Thanksgiving
y. We decided to cook a tradi-
Thanksgiving meal at a very
ditional time of year to remind
at we need to be thankful al-

decided to have our Thanks-
celebration the next Saturday
invite several of our friends to
the meal. On the day of the big
we were up early. Soon the

en," I said, fanning myself with a
piece of newspaper.

Our company arrived with their
own contributions to the meal, and
we sat down to dinner. The joking
atmosphere that had pervaded the
house all day became more serious.
We bowed our heads as we said
grace, in thanks for God's bountiful
blessings.

After dessert, we each shared one
thing we were thankful for and
talked about ways to be more aware
of the blessings God gives us.

After our company left, Tim and I
sank back into our chairs. We talked
about what a blessing the evening
had been and decided to make our
"Thanksgiving in July" a yearly
event. The only change in plans
we're still debating is whether to
make next year's celebration a pic-
nic. ■



of roasting turkey filled the
Tim and I rushed around
g furniture, running the vac-
uuming potatoes, and doing the
things that needed to get
before our company arrived.
we hurried around the house,
ked about things we were
ful for. "I'm thankful I don't
o clean the house everyday," I
sneezing from the dust I'd
."I'm thankful we don't have
apple for dinner every night,"
aid, peeling what seemed like
oth potato. "I'll be thankful
I can get out of this hot kitch-



Teresa Cleary is a free-lance writer from Cincinnati, Ohio. She, her husband, and their two-year-old son will be celebrating Thanksgiving in July again this year.

Living Waters of Faith



The educational series "Living Waters of Faith" offers a powerful testimony to the witness of Christ in the lives of Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American Lutherans. It serves as an important vehicle to promote understanding and affirmation among Lutherans.

LWT excerpts here brief segments from each of four books that make up the series. To learn about the genesis of the materials, see "Living Waters" (p. 18) by Carolyn Green, who coordinated the effort.—ED.

From *Rivers of Living Water* A Hispanic Cultural Awareness Resource

As Christians, and in keeping with the teachings of the Lutheran church, we have promised to proclaim Christ as our Savior and Redeemer. There comes the urging to share with others the special relation we have with God and our neighbor. As we talk with others about Christ and all that he means to us, we confess our faith in Christ Jesus.

Our relationship with God and our neighbor becomes the crux of our Christian calling in the name of Jesus Christ. We are called to share the Word of God with our neighbors as a part of our serving in this ministry.



May God bless you and be with you always.

There are times when we think that to share the gospel message of love and forgiveness takes great effort. This is not true. If we pay attention to our daily conversations, we will find that we share the good news with our neighbor very naturally.

For example, in the Hispanic community, the first thing that a child learns before even knowing what it is to pray is to ask for a blessing.

loved ones. Children automatically say, "Blessings," (literally benedictions), and adults respond by saying something like, "May God bless you and be with you always." What a beautiful way we have of saying good-bye to someone or of greeting a loved one. Through this custom our people, we see that when we ask God to protect someone we love, we are in fact witnessing to a discipleship in this world to which our Lord calls us.

This kind of spontaneous witness, which is so much a part of the Hispanic culture, in itself becomes an affirmation of our faith in Jesus Christ. It illustrates that Christian witness is a vital, natural part of our daily lives. Therefore, it becomes im-

portant that we affirm this rich and varied cultural expression of faith, which easily provides an opportunity to witness to others about our faith.

The blessing is an example of the kind of gift that we are able to bring to the teaching, life, and ministry of the Lutheran church. We can share with others those religious expressions that are so characteristic of the Hispanic community.

Only through faith do we continue to understand how God remains present in the midst of our daily struggles. Each moment God protects us and guides us. These religious expressions capture within our daily language the trust that our people have in the Lord.

From "Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters . . ." A Black Cultural Awareness Resource

brief overview of the history of Black people in the southern United States during the seventeenth century suggests that the "invisible church" was born to the slaves. It is acknowledged that all Black persons in the new world were not enslaved, but it is realized that the Black church was given life through the experience of slavery. Disallowed from speaking with one another for fear of running escape and/or rebellion, the only means slaves had for communication was through work songs during the day and spirituals during evenings.

While Euro-American Christianity was shared with the slaves, slaves chose to interpret God's saving acts in the Bible as their personal story.

In public, they agreed with whatever scriptural interpretations the slave masters and overseers demanded; in private, the Africans had their own, very personal understanding of Moses and Jesus. Music was the key by which they communicated their faith in God's justice and plan for the liberation of all people.

The "invisible church" gave way to the institutional church. Most free Blacks joined African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, and Baptist churches. Music, consistently, was the element which sustained free Afro-Americans. After the Emancipation Proclamation, racism continued to manifest itself in subtlety and insidiousness; chattel slavery be-



came sharecropping, binding law became Jim Crow.

The African's moans and work songs became the Afro-American's spirituals and blues. Physical, psychological and spiritual resistance to oppression was bolstered by the now organized Black churches. The Black church was the only place in which the Afro-American could be free to be God's child, saved by grace and justified by faith in God's saving grace. Worship was the medium by which the toil and tribulation of the present world might be overcome and the glorious hope of bright tomorrows could replace the dismal reality of the present.

Recall that in sixteenth-century Germany during the reform movement, Martin Luther addressed a people who were abused and exploited by the Roman Church. Worship had become the exclusive domain of the priests, and the people were simply seen as objects. Luther opened up

Scripture to the oppressed people and, by so doing, liberated them from ignorance. Tenaciously, he held onto the doctrines of justification by faith and the priesthood of all believers and this had a tremendous effect on the worship life of the German people.

The mass, previously spoken in Latin by the priest and thus removed from the people, was now written in colloquial Ger-

man which all the people could understand. Scripture, at that time read and interpreted exclusively by the priest, was translated into German and was made available to the German people. Music was rewritten, using common folk tunes and simple but meaningful and powerful lyrics.

All in all, the reformation of the church in sixteenth-century Germany had the effect of also liberating the liturgical practices of the people. Worship became the work of the people once again.

Black Lutherans, therefore, have a double inheritance: the Black church legacy and the original Lutheran reform legacy. For sure, Lutheranism has become equated with Euro-American culture, but Black Lutherans have the unique opportunity to minister to other Lutherans and to share both the historical and the ongoing reforming nature of the church.



From *Rivers of Life* A Native American Cultural Awareness Resource

here are different places to start for my group of people to create a theology—that is, people talking about what it is they are doing when they say. Many of America's churches use original sin as that starting point. The argument runs as follows: I have sinned; all have fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Since all have sinned, there must be some way to make amends for our fallenness. Either we develop a theology of works and argue that people can make good for former sins through personal achievement, or, as Christians, we look to the grace of God to forgive us our sins through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now this starting point clearly makes an important assumption, namely, that all human beings are fallen creatures, that is, basically evil and sinful, and in need of divine salvation. While this certainly has a solid biblical ring to it, it is not the Bible's starting point, and it may not be the appropriate starting point for Christian theology in a Native context.

Before the missionaries came, the Native People had little theoretical sense of sin, no sense of fallen humanity, and no sense of basic inclination in every human being to do evil.

To the contrary, the primary sense that our peoples had of themselves in those early days was not a sense of individual fallenness, but the sense of community belonging as a whole group who were in relationship to God as Creator, who together participated in and celebrated the balance and harmony of creation. God created harmony and balance. The people's response was to participate with the Creator in maintaining the harmony and balance of all things.

This is not to say that Native People had an image of themselves as some sort of perfect beings who did not need any divine salvation like that proclaimed in the Christian gospel. Of course, our ancestors understood the existence of evil. That was

*We celebrate first the gift of wholeness and life
that God has bestowed upon us
and all the rest of the world.*



and is a fact of life. What the insight does underscore, however, is that Native Christians need a different theological starting point.

Our starting point would have to be one shared by many other Christians, namely, God's gracious act of creation. From there we can proceed to God's gracious act of redemption in Christ Jesus. Now this will make sense to a lot of Native Persons. Even those who are not Christians can respect and understand this kind of an approach to spirituality. For we celebrate first the gift of wholeness and life that God had bestowed upon us and all the rest of the world.

If we take that seriously, we have to image ourselves not as somehow above creation and in charge of it,

but instead as one of God's created beings, related to all the rest of God's creatures: other people, the four-legged, the winged, and even the trees and streams and mountains.

If this, then, becomes our theological starting point a Native context, then we can go on to celebrate God's other acts of grace and especially the act of grace in Jesus Christ in our behalf. But the primary value for Native People has always been the need for harmony and balance, health and wholeness, not just for the individual, but for the community, for all people, for all of creation. This is the work to which our ancestors committed themselves, because it was and is the response the Creator demands to the gracious act of creation.

From *Eternal River* An Asian Cultural Awareness Resource

Being "different"—it's part of being Asian in the United States. Even fourth-generation Japanese Americans are commonly asked, "Where are you from?" And if the reply is, "I'm from San Francisco," it's likely the questioners will insist, "No, I mean where are you *originally* from."

The deeply rooted assumptions are clear. You look foreign. You must be from somewhere else. You can't possibly speak English. You don't belong here. You're not *really* American.

Even Asians who have reached a high level of distinction aren't exempt from this. Michio Suzuki, United States associate commissioner on aging, tells of the time he went

to visit Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, in Virginia, "There I was infused with patriotism," he recalls, when a woman nearby pointed at some flowers and said to me, "We call these marigolds. What do you call them in *your* country?"

Asians have been set apart as "different" ever since the early days of immigration to this country. And unfortunately, being "different" in the United States is not considered neutral on the scale of values. What is familiar and similar is considered good. Instead of "different," being just *different*, it is considered *not* good at all.

Asian people were usually "welcomed" to the United States when their labor was needed. The Chinese

the first in the gold rush days found themselves barred the rights the majority cul had. In fact, the famous come that the Statue of Lib symbolizes wasn't meant to y to Asians. Just four years e the statue was dedicated 86, the United States gove ment passed its first uncon tional, exclusionary law ast the Chinese, declaring ese workers undesirable ineligible to enter the ed States.

hen this law created a vac for cheap labor, Japanese ns were "imported" to fill need. When discrimination and ctions caused their numbers to ease, Koreans and then Filipi were recruited to take their

1924, Congress passed the Im migration Act, which set numerical as so that immigration was vir restricted to Europeans. It 't until 1965, after civil rights ements had begun to show ght, that the 1924 law was red. ce 1975, the coming of 820,000

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Being "different" is part of being Asian in the United States.

refugees from Southeast Asia has also increased the number and diversity of Asians in the United States. These latest newcomers include ethnic Chinese, Montagnards, Hmong, and Amerasians, as well as Cambodians, Lao, and Vietnamese.

Today, Asians in the United States are the fastest growing ethnic group. We grew from 1.4 million in 1970 to 3.7 million in 1980, and account for 1.6 percent of the total U.S. population.

Rivers of Life (Native American)

15-62359 Participant Book and Leader Guide combined	\$2.25
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Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters (Black)

15-62353 Participant Book	\$1.95
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Transportation and handling charges additional on all orders.

Living Waters

Many of us persons of color have been Lutherans all our lives. Some of our roots in Lutheranism date back to the mid-17th century. Some of us are indeed newcomers. We all bring a variety of cultural and spiritual experiences to Lutheranism. How can these various stories be told? How might we come to a clearer understanding of what our identities, coupled with Lutheranism, mean? How do we affirm our cultural gifts within a Northern European culture? How can we share these concerns with each other, and the larger church?

In 1985, at a social ministry conference convened through the Division of Parish Services in the Lutheran Church in America, a group of racially ethnic peoples

spent many hours wrestling with these issues and questions. Members of the group were tired of being labeled as "marginalized," and "minority" within the Christian community. We felt that our relationship with our church should no longer be confined to social ministry. We had—and still have—much to offer. We wanted to express our wholeness as Lutherans. We wanted to praise it. We wanted to celebrate it. We wanted to write about it.

From that conference, and those

who attended, emerged a vision for an adult curriculum to affirm our racially ethnic cultures, and to link them with Lutheran theological roots. Racially ethnic people were invited to serve as planners, writers and editors of the project.

Coordinating this major effort, especially on the eve of a Lutheran merger, seemed formidable, almost unworkable. But, thanks be to God, it worked! And the "Living Waters of Faith" series was born.

"Rivers" has two firsts: 1) it is the first time North American Lutheranism that such a curriculum has been written *and for* racially ethnic people and 2) it is the first time a curriculum was planned and prepared bilingually, in Spanish from its inception, rather

than, as an afterthought, translating an English resource into Spanish.

These are important resources and are to be commended not only for racially ethnic Lutherans but also for White members of the Lutheran church as well. ■

Carolyn Gruber



SONIA C. GROENEWOLD

*Brief Prayers on News Items***Youth exchange visits**

Several Lutheran youth are now in Japan. Sponsored by the ELCA Division for Global Mission, the trip will take the young people to Kuremo, where they will be hosted at Lutheran high schools. Several students from those schools have visited the U.S. during the last 10 years.

Bless these youth, Lord, in their discoveries and growth.

Music is a gift

Summer is a time for Lutheran music camp and music conferences throughout the ELCA. Martin Luther called music a "fair and lovely gift for God," and said that, next to theology, "I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor."

Bless, O Lord, all the church's musicians. Thank you for the gifts they bring us.

Students need expression

Church women from South Africa earlier this year to discuss the role of women in the church. The Rev. Dr. Denise Ackermann told the group that women should no longer be limited to projects of study in the church but that women need to tell the church what their role is to be.

Lord, you have given gifts to all. Let us not sit back, hiding our talents and waiting to be asked to use them. Make us bold for your cause.

Rural America suffers

"Throughout Rural America, an increasing number of once modestly prosperous and exceptionally productive citizens are finding themselves without food, without work and without homes," says Merle Boos of the ELCA Division for Outreach. Rural poverty is often hidden. Many rural people suffer in silence. Some blame themselves when, in fact, the rural crisis of the 1980s, combined with the 1988 drought, has fueled the loss of more than 600,000 U.S. farms.

Lord of love, you have given us the responsibility and the privilege to care for those in need. Help us to not overlook those who grow our country's food supply.

Children are growing

Hundreds of ELCA children are learning and growing this summer through vacation Bible school programs. Countless hours of preparation are spent by teachers and leaders to make the experience rich for the children.

Guide both students and teachers, O Lord, so that all involved may grow in faith toward you.

Read your daily newspaper and build a prayer list to be revised as needs change. ■

Sonia C. Groenewold is news editor of The Lutheran.

GIVE THE KING THY JUSTICE, O GOD

Study Text: Psalm 72

Frederick and Leola Gaiser

*O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good
with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.*

Katherine Lee Bates,
Service Book and Hymnal 346

*Give the King thy justice, O God . . .
Let the mountains bear prosperity for
the people . . .
May he have dominion from sea to
sea . . .*

*May there be abundance of grain in
the land; on the tops of the moun-
tains may it wave . . . (Psalm 72:1,
3, 8, 16)*

■ The similarities between Psalm 72 and the hymn "America the Beautiful" are striking. Each poem blends praise for what the nation is with a visionary prayer for what it might be. The two poets wrote of different nations, of course—half a world and 2500 years apart. Yet each one rejoiced in what that nation had to offer, while at the same

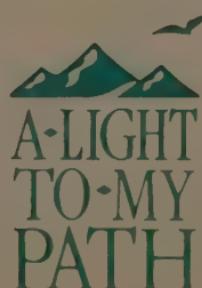
time asking that it become more what it was meant to be.

National songs could serve or contribute to prideful arrogance and sometimes they are written sung that way. But these two are fuller—grateful, yet also critical strong, but also compassionate. biblical psalms touch all of human existence, shaping and informing even national identity. As the people of God read and pray the psalms, reflecting on them, these ancient songs continue to exert their influence on public affairs.

Hearing the Psalm

■ Psalm 72 is a Royal Psalm, a psalm which speaks of the relationship between God and Israel's man king. There are several of these psalms, reflecting the importance of the king in Old Testament

ship. The king was a mediator between God and people, in a sense representing God to the other. The king was a symbol of Israel's unity, a figure around which the people gathered and celebrated. Psalm 72, all of its



es on justice—God's justice. The
er's function was to incarnate the
ice of God for the people of Israel.
one could do this fully, of course.
e books of kings tell us how seri-
ly the monarchs often failed. Yet
ry time Psalm 72 was sung, both
er and people were reminded
at the king was for—not to rule
r the people for his own sake, but
epresent the loving justice of God
all. Listen to how this works as
participate in the reading of the
lm.

Almost every line in this psalm is introduced by *may* or *let* ("May he...," "Let the mountains"). Where would you expect to find this kind of language? How does this affect your understanding of the psalm?

Verses 12-14 break the pattern described above. What might be the reason for this difference?

3 In reading the psalm, verse 20 was not included (the reason for that is discussed more fully later in this session under question 2 of the section, "The Books of the Psalms"). How are verses 18-19 different from the major part of the psalm?

4 This is one of two psalms associated in their titles with Solomon (see also Psalm 127). Read 1 Kings 3:5-9. How might this story relate to Psalm 72?

Thy Justice, O God

Reread Psalm 72:1-4.

In the Old Testament, justice (*mishpat*) is the result of proper judging (*shaphat*), a process by which a disturbed relationship within a social group is restored or repaired. As in Psalm 72, justice and righteousness are frequently found together. *Righteousness* is also a word that has to do with relationships. A righteous

person is one who does what is necessary to keep a relationship intact—with God or with other people. This involves not only being responsible in one's actions, but also being open to and trusting of one another. Justice cannot be achieved only by meeting minimum legal standards. It is also a matter of the heart—a relationship among people under God which allows all, individually and together, to be what God means them to be.

1 A favorite story about royal justice in the Old Testament is found in 1 Kings 3:16-28. Read this account and talk about what it contributes to our understanding of justice. For whom is justice intended?

2 Apparently not only people, but even mountains are invited to contribute to God's just world (verse 3; see also verse 16). What do you think this means?

3 Justice didn't always happen in Israel, and the prophets responded angrily. Read Amos 5:21-24. What does it say about the relationship between justice and worship? How is this important for us?

4 Another prophet spoke of a day when justice would be realized completely. Read Jeremiah 23:5-6. Look again at Psalm 72. Do you think it speaks about a historical king of Israel or about this future messianic king? Should we expect to experience God's justice now or only in the heavenly kingdom?

May Peace Abound
Reread Psalm 72:5-7.

1 In 19th-century treaties, the United States government promised land to Native Americans as long as "the sun shines or while 'the grass grows and the water flows.'" Co-

are this to the words of verses 5 and
What does this language mean?
See Psalm 89:35-37; 2 Samuel 7:16.
Why didn't the promises hold for the
Native Americans? Did God's prom-
ise hold for Israel?

What is the significance of com-
paring the king to rain (verse 6)?

What does it mean to hope that
peace may "abound" (verse 7)? Isn't
peace something you either have or
don't have? Who is responsible for
peace? Compare Psalms 29:11 and
31:14.

From Sea to Sea

Reread Psalm 72:8-11.

■ There are many political and geographical references in this section with which today's readers may not be familiar. The phrase "from sea to sea" (verse 8) could mean something like "from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf," or it could refer to the "cosmic sea"—the waters which surround the earth in ancient Near Eastern thought (see Psalm 24:2).

The "River" in verse 8 can refer to the Euphrates, one of the great rivers of Babylon. It could also mean the river of Eden (Genesis 2:10), or the river, referred to in Psalm 46:4, which symbolically waters the "city of God."

"Tarshish" is a distant land across the Mediterranean Sea (Jonah 1:3). It could be Tartessus in southern Spain. "The isles" (verse 10) probably refer to the island states in the Mediterranean Sea.

"Sheba" (verse 10) refers to people of southern Arabia. The Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-10) represented the distant peoples who came to establish commercial relations and trade wisdom with Solomon. "Seba," also in verse 10, is apparently a variation of the word *Sheba*. When contrasted with Sheba, as in this psalm, it may mean Ethiopia as opposed to Arabia (countries on both sides of the Red Sea).

1 Given these definitions, what do these verses say about the extent of the king's dominion?

2 The same word, *dominion*, is used for the king's reign (verse 8), and for the reign God gave the human race in Genesis 1:28. What does *dominion* mean here in the context of the psalm? How might that help us interpret Genesis 1?

2 Look up Genesis 2:18. What does it mean that someone "has a helper" (Psalm 72:12)?

3 Why would the foreign nations come to pay tribute to Israel? (See Isaiah 2:2-4 and 60:1-7.) If you were asked by a person outside your congregation why he or she should visit or join you, how would you respond?

3 The poor and the needy continue to turn up in this psalm. How do we care for them reflect the justice of God? (See Psalm 10.) Who are some of the poor and oppressed in our society? If we apply this psalm to today, who should care for our poor and needy?

He Delivers the Needy

Reread Psalm 72:12-14.

1 According to verses 12-14, why should all these wishes for the King be granted—that he live long, that nations come to pay him tribute, and so forth?

4 The apocryphal book Sirach suggests that acting like a parent to orphans is like being a child of God (Sirach 4:10). How does that relate to this psalm? Psalm 2:7 shows that Israel saw the king as God's son. Can only royalty be children of God? (See Matthew 5:9; John 1:12.)

May He Live

and Psalm 72:15-17.

This 19th-century treatise *Democracy in America*, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville distinguished between two kinds of patriotism. *Instinctive patriotism*, he said, is connected with our natural affection for our birthplace. It is associated with a taste for ancient customs and a reverence for traditions. It is in itself a kind of religion; it acts not from reason, but acts from faith and sentiment." *Reflective patriotism*, he wrote, is less ardent, perhaps more permanent. "It comes from knowledge, is nurtured by reflection, grows by the exercise of civil rights." Aware that participation in the life of the nation is good for both the country and the individual, the reflective patriot contributes to the prosperity of all. (Quoted in *This Was America*, edited by Oscar Handlin, New York, Harper & Row, 1949, p. 10.)

In what ways does this psalm reflect what de Tocqueville called representative patriotism? Think about your own sense of patriotism. Is it protective (supporting your country) or because it is your country) or is it active (encouraging your country to live up to what it is meant to be)?

2 Two kinds of abundance are spoken of in verse 16. What are they? Why do you think they were important to the psalm?

3 Read Genesis 12:1-3. What does it say about the purpose of God's call of Abraham and Sarah? How does that relate to this section of the psalm (verse 17)? On national occasions we often sing or hear "God Bless America," and we recognize that God has done so. If Psalm 72 is our model, what should be the result of that blessing?

The Books of the Psalms

■ In its present form, the Psalter is divided into five books (Book I, Psalms 1–41; Book II, Psalms 42–72; Book III, Psalms 73–89; Book IV, Psalms 90–106; Book V, Psalms 107–150). It may be that the five books of the Psalter were meant to correspond to the five books of Moses (the Torah or Pentateuch—Genesis through Deuteronomy). Each of the five books closes with a brief song of praise or doxology (Psalm 41:13; 72:18–19; 89:52; 106:48; and Psalm 150 as a whole, which closes the fifth book and the entire Psalter). The doxologies that close the first four books of psalms are not actually part of the psalm with which they are associated; they provide a formal ending to one particular book. Verses 18–19 of Psalm 72 are an example of such a doxology.

1 As we look at verses 18–19, what connections with Psalm 72 might be made?

2 Verse 20 is neither a part of Psalm 72, nor a part of the closing doxology to Book II. What do you think is its purpose? Later on, there are other psalms of David (for example, Psalms 138–145). Given that fact, what do you think verse 20 says

about the Psalter as a whole, or it was put together?

In Closing

Patriotism can sometimes divide people and nations from one another. But rallying around the kind of Psalm 72 is a unifying action. The cause care is taken to include the rich and poor, Israelites and non-Israelites—under the justice of God. In our pluralistic society, no single unifying religious theme will include everyone. Nevertheless, as people of God, we are reminded by this psalm of our privilege and responsibility to encourage governmental actions which contribute to justice, peace, and prosperity for the greater good of all.

Worship

As a diverse people, we share a variety of patriotic hymns. Sing together the “Black national anthem,” “Every Voice and Sing” (*LBW* 51).

Looking Ahead

Summer is a time for celebration. Themes of creation are prominent in the Psalter. God is the creator of the earth and of all people. All creation is dependent upon God. Psalm 104, listening for the harmonies of creation that provide the natural “tune” for this song. ■

THE TYRANNY OF TIME

Steve Charleston

HE OTHER DAY I caught myself telling my 10-year-old son that I didn't think we had time to get a fast-food place before we moved on to our next appointment. Native American, and as a man, I should have had more.

But, like many people of all ages and cultures in North America I am often fooled by the quickness of hand of Western time. I am into believing that time is real. It isn't, of course. Time, as we know it, is only a human metaphor for divine movement. It's our invention for describing change and motion. The great cycle of the seasons, the gradual growth of evolving life, the birth and death of stars: these are time. Creational time. God's time. But stopwatches, time clocks, the industrial work week: these are nothing more than shared agreements. They are as real as we want them to be. And as demanding.

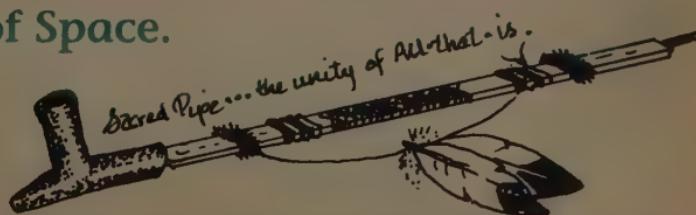
To begin to understand the Native point of view, we need to stop and listen to the common language. Listen to how many words, how many idioms have been created in English to describe something that doesn't exist. Listen, and you begin to hear how real (and dominating) what has become for us has become for us.

For example, in this culture you can: make time, save time, spend time, waste time, cut time, tell time, borrow time, budget time, invest time, find time, lose time, manage time, have time, squander time, squeeze time, push time, bend time, beg time, limit time, spare time, hurry time, slow time, give time, keep time, watch time, free time, stop time, kill time, and even call time out.

MOST OF US ARE FAMILIAR with these time words because we are familiar with the "realities" they describe. They are the cadence to which we march in a fast-moving society. Consider the church. Although on paper we are supposed to be "in this world" and not "of this world," in practice we usually run right alongside the rest of the country in its marathon race against the clock.

Think of how many parishes run their clergy ragged. Think of how many clergy seem almost proud to say that they have "precious little time left" for themselves or their

The Messiah was not only
Lord of Time, but Lord
of Space.



families. Think of how many bishops or church executives spend their lives going from office to airport. Think of how nervous we get if the worship service runs late. And behind the scenes, during the week, think of how many of us "not-of-this-worlders" tell our kids that we have run out of time for them.

AS CHRISTIANS, are we really that much different? Are we really an alternative for this hyped-up society? Are we part of an answer, or just part of the stampede?

Native American Christians see great irony in the fact that most of the church has run off and left Jesus standing in the dust. Racing toward (literally) God knows where, the church has forgot that the Messiah was not only Lord of Time, but Lord of Space. We are called to follow Jesus, not run past him. We are called to come closer, to draw near, to narrow the distance between ourselves and our Creator. These are not descriptions of time, but of space. Time is an illusion. Space is a reality.

Where we are right now is real. Where we may be five hours from

now is in the hands of God. Our cored ground is the ground we stand on. This is where we move, breathe and have our being. Here is where we make choices and become cocreators with our God. Not in time, but in space.

Isn't it strange that we Christians have become so addicted to time when our Christ was so unconcerned about it? After all, when he was asked the biggest time question of all, "When will the end of time?" he simply replied, like a good Indian, "I have no idea." And why? Because like a Native American medicine person, Jesus knows that love is not in space, not in time.

LOVE IS REAL because it is timeless, because it exists in warm, intimate spaces of shared lives. Love is born in an embrace, a narrowing of distance to the point where self and others lose meaning. Here time stands still. Community, kinship, family: these are the bonds of life in the real world.

Today, these bonds are being torn apart by the hands of Western culture.

We have a new idiom that, a new "time vocabulary" to mask the continuing destruction of love in society: it is called "activity" time. Now not only are we quantifying time, we are qualifying it. We are willing into existence the illusion that love can be measured by seconds or minutes: that human relationships can be made warm in the n

Where we are right now is real. Where we may be five hours from now is in the hands of God.



ve of quick encoun-

We are pretending that can care for children convenient time; that can learn from elders convenient time; that can maintain mar- ges in convenient e. In doing all of this, are pretending that

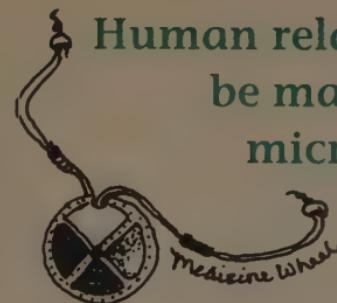
e has been made convenient for when in fact, our lives have to be le convenient for time. The re- s are clear. Neglected children,

ly elders, empty adults.

tanding on the merry-go-round never stops, we are also pre- tting that this is fun. That we like g this way and that we aren't os at all. Sure, we watch a lot eople go flying off as the time el spins faster. The kids. The ndparents. The friends. The wife usband. But, hey, that's life in the lane, right?

ot right. Not if we stop long ugh to stand close to Jesus. As we in English, "take some time" to the New Testament. Look for Native (space-conscious) Jesus his Western (time-conscious) stles. There you will find a story esus sitting on a hilltop, sur- ded by thousands of people who ed to get near to him. But the stles think it's getting late. They t to send the crowd away so they grab a quick dinner. And what Jesus do? Does he call the meet- o a close? Does he clock out for day as our Messiah? No, he ig- s time and does something won- l with a handful of fish and a oaves of bread. He brings a com-

Human relationships can't be made warm in the microwave of quick encounters.



munity into being. He works a mir- acle because a miracle is a space without time. It is a close encounter with a living God.

And what about the kids? The Apostles know how much time kids can take up, so they try to chase them away to help keep things moving smoothly on the agenda for the day. But Jesus tells them to forget time and he calls the children into his space, into his love, for such is the community of God.

OVER AND OVER AGAIN, Jesus fulfills time by bringing it down to earth. As the true Christ of Native tradition, he knows that angels don't wear watches. He shows us that as God's time embr- es us in a great mystery, so we must embrace one another in the mystery of love. And when does that need to happen? Right now. And where does it happen? Right here.

Today is the day of salvation. Now is the acceptable time of the Lord. And where we are is sacred ground. Love is real. The rest is just make- believe. ■

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**YIELDING TO
COURAGE**

Yielding to Courage—The Spiritual Path to Overcoming Fear by Judith C. Lechman (Harper and Row, 1988, \$14.95).

This is the story of one woman's journey and the personal challenges that brought her to a rich and profound faith life. More than a unique biography, it becomes a clearly defined road map for our own journey from spiritual hopelessness to courage, peace and faith.

In this book we are challenged to seek the pathways of God's transforming love. We are offered the means to take a spiritual journey from fear and despair to certainty and courage, where faith and love dwell. This journey toward a full relationship with our Creator allows us to meet God and grow in God's peace.

To encounter God we must acknowledge the depth of our personal fear, as well as the reality of the specific world in which we are called to live. We are asked to be honest with ourselves.

Through a solid prayer life we will experience the transformation of our spiritual selves as we journey toward assurance and an unshakable faith in God.

*Jan Robbins
Middleton, Wisconsin*

**EXTRAVAGANT
LOVE**

Extravagant Love by Mary Schramm (Augsburg, 1988, \$6.95)

This is one of those "aha" books which one recognizes that the truth of Mary Schramm's call to nonviolence in every aspect of our lives is really the *only* way to live, if we are true followers of Jesus Christ. The concept is just as revolutionary today as it was 2000 years ago.

From actively working to change laws that foster hunger and oppression in our society to boycotting products from countries that exploit people, to refusing to pay taxes used to buy military arms, from working in a soup kitchen or a shelter for women to choosing a less materialistic style, to turning the other cheek, returning kindness for violence—the reader is challenged to see that change begins with an individual conscious effort to practice nonviolence. Only through complete dependence on God's extravagant love can we be enabled to give our lives to others.

A most thought-provoking book.
*Iris F. Bents
Palatine, Illinois*



LIVING THE PROMISES OF GOD

Living the Promises of God by Paul Miller (Augsburg, 1988, \$12.95).

This book offers 365 readings designed for one-day-at-a-time recovery from loss, sorrow and grief and the renewal of faith, hope and love. Along with the memorials and prayers, this book would be an excellent gift for anyone working through the grief process. Even tear-filled readers can easily read the large print. The message from Scripture does not harshly judge but gently leads the reader to accept the loss and once more to believe that with God all things are possible.

Norma Edison
Eleva, Wisconsin



YOU CAN'T KILL THE SPIRIT

You Can't Kill the Spirit by Pam McAllister (New Society Publishers, 1988). Hardcover \$34.95, Paperback \$12.95, plus \$1.50 postage and handling. Order from New Society Publishers, P.O. Box 582, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

"Anzac Day" in Australia is the day set aside to honor war veterans and remember the dead. As with observances in other countries, it had become not much more than a boastful, flag-waving parade and an excuse for beer drinking. In 1981, however, in 300

women attempted to join the parade carrying a banner which read, "In memory of all women, of all countries, raped in all wars."

This is just one example from Pam McAllister's book, *You Can't Kill the Spirit*, of women using creative non-violence to make a point.

The book touches on issues from dowry marriages in India and pass-laws in South Africa to anti-nuclear actions in the United States. Tactics range from singing to civil disobedience. The book is well documented and indexed, including a chronology dating from 1300 B.C. It is not only fascinating to read, but a good resource book and potential guide for people interested in social justice and the creative means toward it.

Joan Elbert
Paris, France



THE SIX DAYS OF DESTRUCTION

The Six Days of Destruction by Elie Wiesel and Albert H. Frielander (Paulist Press, 1988, \$4.95 paper, \$9.95 cloth).

Subtitled *Meditations Toward Hope*, *The Six Days of Destruction* is an invitation for personal and community growth in comprehending the Holocaust and interpreting it through the eyes of faith. This is accomplished through a series of vignettes by Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, who constructs his stories of destruction to contrast with the Genesis account of the six days of creation. The result is a dramatic and moving realization of the extent to which human sinfulness and evil

can strain the goodness and potential of God's creation.

The need to respond to this increased awareness is addressed in the second portion of the book, written by Rabbi Albert Frilander. Essays addressed to both Christians and Jews are followed by two carefully crafted liturgies, one designed for Jewish communities and one an interreligious service. Suggestions for utilizing the six stories by Wiesel within the liturgies are offered.

The liturgies would be particularly useful for a community worship service for Yom Ha'Shoah, the day of commemoration of the Holocaust. Even without the chance to use this resource in a group setting, the opportunity for personal growth and reflection it offers should not be missed.

*Donna Hacker Smith
Freeport, Illinois*



THE AMERICAN WOMAN 1988-89: A STATUS REPORT

The American Woman 1988-89: A Status Report edited by Sara E. Rix and produced by the Women's Research and Education Institute (W. W. Norton, 1988, \$9.95).

Today four times as many mothers are working outside the home as in 1950, and 70 percent of all women of child-bearing age are in the work-force.

This is an excellent resource book for anyone trying to help our political and social system—or his or her personal life—catch up with this reality. It offers statistics from academic and government research, along with

concise analyses that give the meaning behind the numbers.

The first of 20 essays, "A Rich Life: A Reflection of the Woman Movement" takes the reader from 1966 to present day, and concludes that women have made significant legal and political gains, but that change at the family level has come more slowly.

Essays on women in specific occupations (music, farming, clergy, road construction, and law enforcement) celebrate the gains women have made in these traditionally male-dominated professions. Other essays on the wage gap (women earn 64 cents for every \$1 earned by men) and occupational "resegregation" point out that 80 percent of women remain concentrated in female-dominated, low-paying jobs, and that when they move into formerly male-dominated jobs, the average wage for those jobs declines.

An essay on women's health status and insurance coverage clearly documents that poor women and their children, the majority of this nation's poor, are less healthy than the general population. Other essays include topics such as women in politics, Black women in education, battered women, women and AIDS, and women in prison. An appendix in the back of the book includes pages of charts and graphs.

This is the second annual edition of *The American Woman* and the editor seeks reader opinion for future versions.

*Christine Halvorson
St. Paul, Minnesota*

Unless otherwise noted, books viewed in LWT can be purchased ordered through most bookstores by contacting your nearest Augsburg Fortress location.

A Tale from the Inner City

Barbara Jurgensen



hen the bishop asked me to serve as the pastor of Hope Church that fall, he noted that the neighborhood changed. He said that the church's membership had dwindled from a high of 1200 to 1500 people to a low of 500. Members had moved to the suburbs, and soon it was going to have to close.

I arrived at the old brown church on a warm but somewhat overcast Sunday morning in December. The first thing the people wanted to know was when I was going to start the confirmation class. "I don't get it going right," a longtime parishioner said. "People with kids will leave another church, and then we won't have any young people."

I asked how many seventh and eighth-graders they had.

"We've got a big class this year," I was told. "Two seventh-graders and two eighth-graders."

"Four?" I said. "That's not really enough to have a good time together. Why don't you look around among your neighbors and friends and bring me the names of as many unchurched young people as you can. You invite them and I'll invite them and we'll see if we can get a bigger class going."

And so each Sunday during the announcements for the next few weeks I asked people to look for potential class members.

By the time class started a few weeks later we had rounded up six more young people to add to our four for a total of 10. I stopped reminding people to bring me names, but they kept bringing them anyway. By Christmas we had 15.

These 15 became the first youth group the congregation had had for several years. We went bowling, we had Bible study, we ate pizza, we

went Christmas caroling to the shut-ins, we made banners for the sanctuary.

One of the young people our members brought in that fall, Andy, had never attended a church before. As he came week after week and learned about the Lord who loved him and was calling him to be a disciple, he became a person of faith.

One Saturday morning we made a banner in confirmation class, then went over to the church to hang it up. Andy climbed the ladder, lifted the cord of the banner up onto the nail in the wall, and pulled the banner from one side to the other until it finally hung straight.

When he got it in place, he climbed down and stepped back for a look at his handiwork. Then he went over and sat down in the pastor's ornate chair behind the pulpit, partly to rest and admire his work and partly, I think, to see what it would feel like to be seated there.

He had many gifts, I thought, that could help him be a good pastor. As I watched him run his hand over the scrollwork of one of the arms, I said, "Andy, maybe some day you'll be sitting in a chair like this."

As I drove home later that day and thought how Andy had never known any pastor but me, I wondered if I should have said to him, "You know, Andy, men can be pastors, too." ■

The Rev. Barbara Jurgensen is an assistant professor of ministry and contextual education at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. From 1978 to 1984, Pastor Jurgensen served an inner-city congregation in Chicago.

REFLECTIONS ON MULTICULTURAL WRITERS

We are writers. God has given us words. We are 16 people of color who have come to learn and serve. We are "candidates," as they call us, for the Asian, Black, Hispanic and Native American Writers Workshop. We will be coming together for the next three years for this project. There are four from each racial group. Eight of us are women.

The purpose of this workshop is to develop the God-given talents of multicultural writers for God's service through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The program also seeks to give additional training to the candidates to enhance their writing skills. Initiated by the mission for Multicultural Ministry, this project is one of the ways ELCA is tapping the cultural richness and diversity of the church.

Let me share with you some of the images we explored at the workshop.

The heartiest vegetable soup vigorates. It's the simmered combination which provides a sustaining broth. Potatoes are good, and are potatoes in the soup, but not just potatoes. The potatoes are better because the carrots, celery, onions and beans are in there with them.

VISION OF WHOLENESS

Inez Torres Davis

vise, it takes all of God's people to vitalize the church. All peoples are required to provide the full flavor of gifts.

Tapestry both subtle shadings and just tints are key to its beauty. Finest tapestries, colors run end to end. The colors are also present, even if they are not evident. It's the total pattern that communicates the intent of the

cultural writers have rich insight to offer: The wisdom of the native soil, the dance of wholeness, the joy of the. Our participation makes the latter, the tapestry richer.

rite—recordings drawn out journeys of sojourners. We practice the full partnership in God has called us all. We are planted in a church which has roots to the great leader of Martin Luther. We embrace Luther's insights, and all revisions which clarify the challenge

At the workshop we embraced each other. Never have I felt so much a part of the church that calls itself the ELCA as I did in this group. We shared common experiences. I wasn't asked to justify my perceptions, defend my pain, or control my exuberance. There were no labels. I was supported as a person, affirmed as a writer. We celebrated God's goodness throughout the workshop. We talked. We prayed. On our last morning, we celebrated the sacrament of wholeness.

I had come to the workshop unsure of what I was being asked to do. I left with a stronger understanding that the greatest vision for the church remains that of wholeness. Christ's presence within God's people of all colors can help the church realize that wholeness and savor it.

We are writers. We have been given words. May God bless our words as God chooses to use us. ■



PAULA BURTNES, MARY JOHNSON AND KEITH SEHNER

Lost in a Vitamin Jungle

When you walk through the aisles of today's stores, it's easy to get lost in the maze of vitamin and mineral supplements. Should a person use supplements or not? The claims, counterclaims and Madison Avenue marketing techniques can leave the consumer feeling confused and anxious.

If you feel lost in the vitamin jungle, it's helpful to know there are two main "base camps." The first is supported by the huge supplement industry (closely related and sometimes owned by pharmaceutical companies). They advocate, "if a little is good, more is better." Their ads would have you believe that everyone needs supplements, whether you're a young athlete, a frail elder or a stressed businessperson.

The other camp may state their position under a headline such as "Nutrition groups advise against taking vitamins" or "Vitamin supplements open to question." This point of view has been promoted by organizations such as the American Dietetic Association, the American Society for Clinical Nutrition, and the American Medical Association.

This camp also includes doctors who, for a variety of reasons, are not

Diet
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Christian
church.

particularly interested in nutrition. Although they understand the role of nutrition in helping people get and stay well, they may have found that it takes a lot of time to educate patients about these issues. Enthusiasm for nutritional counseling has wavered as physicians learned that many health in-

ance companies and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are willing to pay doctors to provide these services.

So, when a patient asks, "Should I take vitamins?" they may be told, "You will rarely need to take vitamins or minerals if you eat three balanced meals each day."

Surveys seem to show that patients and consumers are tilted toward taking supplements. Recent studies show almost half of all people in the U.S. are taking supplements.

Both sides in the controversy agree that certain types of people need supplements:

- ◆ **Women** with excessive menstrual bleeding need extra iron.
- ◆ **Pregnant women** and mothers breast-feeding their babies require iron, folic acid, calcium and other nutrients.
- ◆ **Elderly persons** with low

intake require supplements. Strict vegetarians who follow a probiotic diet probably need extra calcium, iron, zinc and vitamin B12.

Persons on restrictive diets due to food allergies or who have Crohn's disease-related-complex (CRC) require certain amino acid supplements.

Alcoholics and persons abusing chemicals need certain amino acids, minerals and vitamins.

Patients on medications such as diuretics for high blood pressure and heart problems benefit from mineral supplements such as potassium and magnesium.

It's not just a matter of being "for" or "against" vitamins and supplements. Many observers admit that the average American diet doesn't meet the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of nutrients. A member of the Council for Responsible Nutrition representing the vitamin industry stated flatly, "Most people, most of the time, don't receive recommended nutritional values."

Today's farming practices, the food industry's processing technology, the non-use of preservatives, storage and shipping methods, all affect the quality of food. Critics claim the quality of food we buy has suffered.

So where does that leave us? The Rev. Charles W. B. Lohman, a Lutheran pastor from Washburn, Iowa, developed what he calls "theology." Lohman states emphatically, "Diet is not a peripheral issue for the Christian church. Becoming caretakers for our bodies, our environment,

our local economies and our Third World brothers and sisters begins in our kitchens and in our mouths."

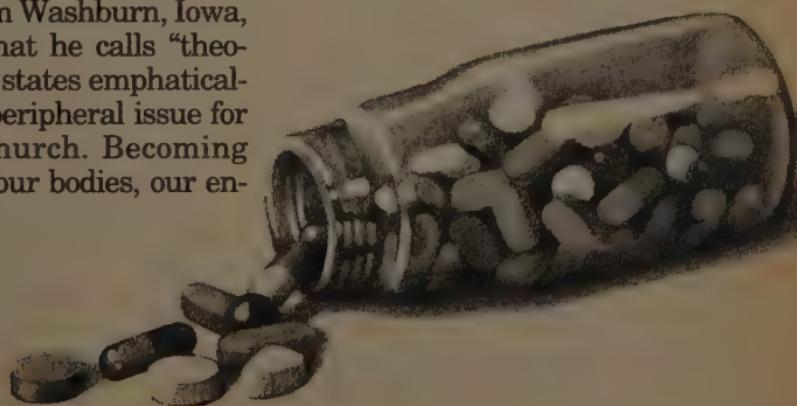
Out of this comes Pastor Lohman's "O.W.L. Rules." These three interesting principles can help improve our chances of ingesting needed vitamins and minerals through diet, instead of over the counter. Lohman urges people to buy and prepare food that has these characteristics:

ORGANIC. Select food that has been grown by organic methods and is free of pesticides, sprays and other common agricultural chemicals.

WHOLE. Preference should be given to whole grains and foods that are not highly processed, packaged and promoted.

LOCAL. Whenever possible, support the local produce from your area through your farmers' market, co-op, health-food store and similar outlets. Grow your own food if possible. The shorter the distance from the garden to kitchen, the better.

Another good start is to visit your library. It may still be "a jungle out there," but nutritional and scientific literature can serve as a guide. Study the facts. Learn how they apply to you and yours. ■



The Wounded Deer

Al Erickson with
Carolyn Brown

At three o'clock in the morning, Jan awoke with a start. She felt her husband stirring as she fumbled for the phone.

Would she take a collect call from Suzie, their daughter? Her heart raced as she said yes. She whispered, "Ralph, it's Suzie, get on the other phone."

"Hi, Mom, this is Suzie. I'm doing real well. Don't be worried about me." The voice was high-pitched and sounded unreal. She's on drugs, Jan thought.

A man's voice came on the line. "Hello, this is Sam. I'm with your daughter and she is doing fine."

"Who are you?" Jan asked, but she already knew. Sam was a pimp, Suzie was one of his prostitutes.

"I'm a friend of your daughter, but now time is up. Good night." And he hung up—leaving no number, no address, no contact point. Ralph came back to the bedroom and he and Jan looked at each other as though they had just been hit by a steamroller.

They could not believe what was happening to them and to Suzie. Su-

zie was a good person and a Christian. Jan and Ralph had thought she was immune from the hideousness of the situation in which she now found herself—prostitution. They had believed prostitutes were bad people from the start. They now realized how wrong their view was.

**Prostitutes
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out.**

rostitutes, they'd come to learn, most often victims, "more sinned against than sinning." Yet they often don't recognize the ways in which they have been victimized. The pimp separates them from family, often involves them in crime and drugs. There seems to be no place to turn. They are trapped by their own guilt and shame, by the disdain of society, police and even by the church. Does anybody care about Suzie? What about Ralph and Jan and other families who suffer because of prostitution? Central Lutheran Church of Minneapolis is discovering that its members care. Members and staff of the church are committed to help break the cycle and are putting together a ministry to those victimized by the sex industry. They feel that strong promises of God will bless their efforts for the oppressed. They are mindful that to see oppression and not confront it contributes to the problem.

A survivor of prostitution, Carolyn Brown, is helping the congregation learn more about the prostitution issue. An immense new convention center for Minneapolis is being constructed just a block to the west of the church. It will attract a great deal of prostitution activity very near the sanctuary.

Central Lutheran is finding some help. Lutheran Social Services of St. Paul has staff people working out on the streets to contact people in prostitution, both female and male, and try to help them find ways out of their dilemmas.

First Lutheran of Alexandria, Minnesota, has a group of members dedicated to developing awareness about prostitution in that area. Different government and private agencies provide a drop-in center, support groups, and transitional housing for

To see
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those victims who are learning to be survivors.

The challenge is immense. There seem to be few family support groups for people like Ralph and Jan. There is no group for prostitute's families like Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, no newsletters for families. Most families who have members trapped in prostitution suffer in anguished silence.

Carolyn Brown told her story to Central Lutheran's youth group.

"I am 53 years old and have come to believe I'm a walking miracle. Between the ages of 17 and 44, I lived in hell—a combination of prostitution, chemical dependency, two trips to prison, single motherhood, welfare, a trip to a mental hospital, beatings and rapes. Because men bought, sold and rented parts of my body, I was made to feel ashamed, guilty, dirty, evil and unworthy. Alcohol and prescription drugs numbed the pain and helped me separate my mind from my body during the worst of the violence. All around me people were

dying. What, I asked myself, kept me alive? My small-town values were gone, my Lutheran beliefs were smashed, so who was helping me through this?"

She continued: "Part of the answer came when I began the journey toward sanity, serenity and sobriety after completing treatment for chemical dependency. I joined a support group of women leaving prostitution, got more counseling, took a two-year course in college. I learned I had been one of many victims of an \$8 billion industry that flourishes in the United States."

Most of us don't know how to relate to the wounded, the throwaways, the used and abused.

Prostitution is a subject few want to think about, let alone grapple with. Of all the social justice issues of the day, prostitution is especially scary. It takes real courage and integrity to look beyond the surface behavior at the many negative experiences which have enmeshed a person in prostitution.

Suzie had been raped, and her parents have come to believe that

this experience made her vulnerable to the psychological hype, drugs, and intimidation of the pimp. Like a wounded deer, a young person victimized by such horrors as incest, molestation, physical abuse or rape may be hunted down by those who want only evil for them.

Most of us don't know how to relate to the wounded, the throwaways, the used and abused. We may see them acting out their hurt and call them "wild," "bad," and "delinquent." It probably never occurs to us that someone might have taken advantage of them. We never think that they might have been hurt or abused in some way. We never think of prostitutes as victims.

A newsletter is being developed for those who want to know more about ministry to those in prostitution, including what resources are available. For more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to

Task Force on Sexual
Victimization
Central Lutheran Church
333 S. 12th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404

or contact

Grassroots Ministry
813 E. 22nd Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 871-2298. ■

The Rev. Al Erickson is director of Grassroots Ministry, an organization which helps local Lutheran congregations re-root in inner-city neighborhoods and establish contact with wounded people. Carolyn Brown is a survivor, consultant, and facilitator for PRIDE (People Reaching Independence, Dignity and Equality), a program of Minneapolis Family & Children's Services.

Agaliece Miller

*can hold on to our roots
eritage at the same time
expand our vision."*

would convince a newly retired woman in her 70s to accept a personal invitation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, becoming a second official employee?

For Agaliece Miller, it took her husband, Waymond, to convince her. When they had been looking for a place to live, Waymond suggested spending more time together before retirement, he reminded her of his love for the Lutheran church and his commitment to the inclusive nature of the new church. He generally encouraged her to accept the invitation "and help this church that means so much to you get started." A month after Agaliece accepted the position, Waymond died. "If I have this job and these people come to every day, I wouldn't get up in the morning," Agaliece said during that time. Here is a real woman living out God's grace with style, graciousness and acuity.

Associate director for training and employee relations, one of Agaliece Miller's primary responsibilities at ELCA is to help translate the church's commitment to inclusiveness into reality. She brings to her work her expertise in the field of



employment and human resources—and perhaps more important—personal experience in her own Lutheran congregation in the hard work of becoming inclusive.

In 1951, the Millers were the first Blacks to buy a home in Chicago's Chatham/Park Manor community. Their home was right across the street from a Lutheran church. "Not all the neighbors were happy to welcome us, so we were especially impressed when the Lutheran pastor came to visit and personally invited us to come to church and asked our daughter to attend vacation Bible school." This personal—and risky—welcome helped turn the Millers into committed Lutherans.

Agaliece Miller's 38 years at Salem Lutheran Church has given evidence that inclusiveness can work, and that when it does the whole congregation benefits. "But it didn't happen without a lot of effort and commitment from both the Blacks and Whites in the congregation," she notes. "Our congregation worked—and works—hard to share its rich Lutheran heritage as well as to share, value and incorporate the rich heritage of Black worship."

"I am excited at the inclusive direction we're moving toward."

Miller tells of volunteering during a church work day to clean the church washrooms and being taught by her Swedish partner just what thorough cleaning entailed. Miller comments, "There's something about working together that breaks down barriers, and something about polishing the church that purifies the laborer." Some time later, the Millers' daughter Barbara was the first Black Santa Lucia in the congregation and the youth group won a community Black history contest.

Miller also underscores the importance of mutual appreciation. She is especially grateful to that first pastor who stepped out in faith, and also for the women in her congregation's women's group. "I had never experienced such dedication, commitment and hard work. The women showed me the many ways one can demonstrate and live out faith. It seems to

me that the harder I worked, the stronger I grew in faith."

For Agaliece Miller the most important part of her personal story is the transformation she witnessed as a member of Salem. That is what led her to her position with the ELCA.

"Now I have the opportunity to be part of another transformation. I'm excited at the inclusive direction we're moving toward. I've seen it happen firsthand. I know it takes work. We can hold on to our roots and heritage at the same time as we expand our vision. I thank God that I can be part of this opportunity."

Barbara Tollefson is employee benefits coordinator for the church office of the ELCA. She lives in Spring Meadows, Illinois, with her husband and two college-student daughters.

Norma Jean Strommen

"People need to fall apart into gentle, loving arms."

Death occurs anytime, anywhere, with or without warning. One minute the body is full of life, the next minute it is a shell. "There is such an act of mystery between life and



death," comments Norma Strommen, director of education and family support services for a Duluth, Minnesota, funeral home. "It is

"The bereaved feel out-of-control and isolated."

death, a life has been lived." Strommen's mid-life career was the answer to a prayer several years before—"that I have a job I really loved by the time I was 40." During her 40th year, '83, she was hired to develop a created position, grief support group counselor. Grief support groups ago become an integral part of Strommen's Christian ministry experience. It began while she was in college, when both her brother and mother died. Instead of studying, she found herself in the school library searching through volumes for an appropriate quotation to put on a card she sent to her mother each

year teaching high school English. Strommen was a homemaker for 12 years, nurturing her three children from diapers to name-brand clothes. Since reentering the work force, she has been an early-child-education parent-facilitator and teacher of prisoners.

As a pastor's wife, Strommen has learned that pastors and funeral directors cannot offer the long-term support the grieving need. After the funeral, when the friends and relatives have gone home and the last meal dish has been returned, the bereaver is left alone with his or her

husband developed the habit of writing in a notebook names of those she knew who were grieving. She sent them her handmade cards—not only in the following few months, but in some cases,

for years.

Her job as grief counselor is actually an ongoing life-style. "I have a passion for this kind of work," Strommen says. Initiating relationships with bereaved people, she takes them out for coffee or visits their homes, doing what family and friends may find most difficult to do.

Strommen offers grief support for those who desire it. "The bereaved feel crazy, out-of-control and isolated. Emotionally they are falling apart, when the culture says 'snap out of it.'" Interacting with a group validates their feelings and defuses their guilt and fears. Many who have participated in her "Shalom" groups are later trained to lead groups in their own parishes.

Strommen also speaks to churches and community organizations about "good" grief. Immediate needs of the bereaved are to be able to talk about the deceased, to cry, to be honest about the pain. "Grieving people need permission to fall apart!" Strommen says. "It takes a long time to heal—not to 'get over it.' You never get over it."

"It is such a tender, vulnerable time, people need to fall apart into gentle, loving arms," Strommen observes. "I can be there, and can network the person into helpful, healing support systems." ■

Lisa Oas, a homemaker, wife, mother, editor, speaker and free-lance writer, lives in Duluth, Minnesota.

"Grieving people need permission to fall apart!"

It takes a long time to heal."

ZEMLI

Gwen Carr

I am four generations from slavery. I was born in 1948; my mother, Fannie, was born in 1928. Her mother, Cooper, was born 1891 and is still alive. Cooper's mother's name was Molly and died when Cooper was a young woman. Molly's mother's name was Zemli and Zemli lived through slavery.

How little I know about my past—except that these women are my past, my history, my Black history. My mother was the first Lutheran in the family. My grandmother calls herself a Texas Baptist.

I wonder what Zemli might have looked like. Dimples run in my family. Did she have dimples? Was she short or tall, fair-skinned or darker?

What might Zemli have worn? She probably wore a scarf on her head like this, to protect her from the unmerciful sun and the dust of the fields.

Zemli was one of over 2 million girls and women who lived in slavery

in the United States. Most of them worked in the fields, and about 10 percent worked in the house.

They were survivors. They had children, cared for their children, worked in the fields, tended the children of masters, and grieved as their families were broken up. Their babies sold away from them.

They came from Africa, but had different cultural backgrounds, speaking different languages and dialects. So communication was difficult, even with each other.

Women's work was hardly distinguishable from men's work at the time. There was little division of labor, except on some larger plantations. Reading and writing were not lawed, so learning and teaching was done secretly.

We know that slaves were mentally and physically abused. Women were raped; there were murders. We can wonder what horrors Zemli faced with her.

Their original names were taken from them. In my family, for example, there are names like Callie, Hook, McGraw and Perro. These are African names, but, never our names and our history.

Religion was important in



ves, and they clung to their Christianity was introduced to slaves as a way to "keep them in by preaching that disobedience our "master" was a sin and by interpreting "God's will" to mean African people should stay in slavery. The slaves grew in Christianity, however, they felt Christ's love and the gospel of liberation. I hope she took consolation in her faith, just slaves did. Their prayers and show a love and trust in the of justice, mercy and love. The beautiful Black spirituals give



taste of the feelings and emotions that built up inside these women. Such songs sometimes told of excitement, of strife and pain. But through all the sorrow, there is always the breath of hope and faith in divine justice of God.

Music is beautiful and more than the words. The sounds and movements found in spirituals are the rhythms and dances of Africa. They are the sounds and movements found in black church today.

Zemli sing and feel these sounds of pain and hope? Did they ever sing in a life whose natural sounds were contorted by slavery?



Perhaps she sang "Oh, Freedom! Oh freedom! Oh, freedom over me. And before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave and go home to my Lord and be free!"

As we remember those who have gone before us in the faith, both slaves and free, we know that slavery still exists—physical, political, economic and emotional slavery.

Dear God, we ask for your mercy on all those who remain in slavery today. Empower us to make a difference, to shine a light into their darkness, and be an instrument of their peace. In the name of Jesus, for his death and glorious resurrection. Amen. ■

Gwen Carr, a Women of the ELCA churchwide board member from Salem, Oregon, presented a version of this story at the February board meeting in celebration of Black History Month. She is pictured here as she made the physical transformation from Gwen Carr to Zemli during the devotion.

CELEBRATE GOD'S CREATION

Women of the ELCA Convention Update

Plans are under way for the Women of the ELCA First Triennial Convention, to be held July 12-15, 1990 in Anaheim, California.

The convention logo (shown in color on the back cover) captures the joyful spirit of the convention theme "Celebrate God's Creation." Consider for a moment the logo and its symbolism. Take this opportunity to meditate on your relationship with the Creator and creation.

The biblical foundation for the convention theme and logo is drawn from the first account of the creation story (Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a). From this story we understand that we are called to be actively involved in the sacredness of God's creation and, as children

of God, live as stewards and caretakers of God's creation. Concern for the integrity of creation motivates us to work toward healing and the restoration of wholeness in our lives, our relationships and our world.

The hymn chosen for the convention, "God, Who Stretchest Out the Spangled Heavens" (*Lutheran Book of Worship* 463), is a song of praise for creation and a prayer that we may be its faithful caretakers. A line from the hymn, "Great Creator, still create in us," shows us what we yet may do to serve as the convention motto.

Using the Convention Logo

convention planners are enthusiastic about the new convention logo and all that it symbolizes. In the coming year, you will note it heralded on the convention on mailings, brochures, and other items. Your women's organization is welcome to use the logo too, on materials you develop to generate enthusiasm for the annual convention. Time-specific symbols like the convention logo usually carry fewer restrictions than an organization's trademark, such as Women of the ELCA's cross and flower lily. However, the convention logo should not be used with projects that are not related to Women of the ELCA First Annual Convention.

regarding colors. If only one color can be used, use either all black, magenta or green. If two colors can be used, use magenta and green as shown on the back cover of this issue.

You will note in the 1989-
Women of the ELCA cat-
that several items featur-
the convention logo will be
able in September. They
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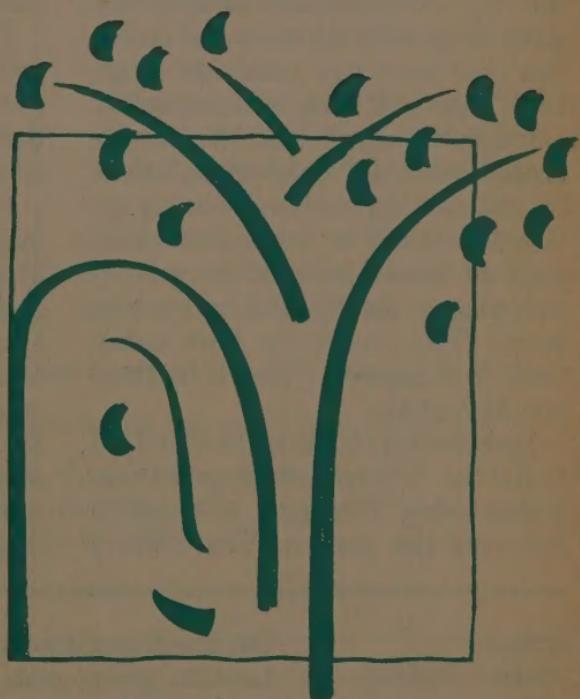
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her mailings (code 2-9018,
25 cents).

bookmarks, bulletin covers, the 1990 Women of the ELCA calendar will all bear biennial convention logo. The Women of the ELCA

catalog or call your nearest Augsburg Fortress location for further details.

Be watching, too, for the Women of the ELCA September packet (mailed one to a congregation) for samples of some of these items and a Women of the ELCA First Triennial Convention poster.

Come "Celebrate God's Creation" with the Women of the ELCA at the First Triennial Convention July 12-15, 1990!



CELEBRATE GOD'S CREATION

SALLY MARIE MEYER

Thanks, God

Well, God, you can go ahead and tell me, "I told you so." You were right—as always. I woke up that Saturday morning, and I wanted just to turn over and go back to sleep. Our new Women's Conference Celebration was that day, but I didn't really want to go. I was tired. I wasn't feeling very well. And I had a million things to do at home.

But I felt your gentle prodding, God, and so I sighed and got up. I showered, dressed, and took two aspirin along with my toast and coffee. "Are you sure you want me to go, God?" I prayed. "Yes," you answered.

I quickly made out the week's shopping list as I finished my coffee. I could hear my husband stirring upstairs. I hated to leave him alone with all three kids and the grocery shopping to do. He had had a long week. "They need me here today, God," I whispered. "They'll be fine," you answered.

I grabbed my Bible and walked out to the car. "I should really pull those weeds today," I thought, as I quickly surveyed the garden. "Don't worry

about the garden," I heard you say.

What treasures you had in store for me! I immediately saw half a dozen familiar faces—and I found peace and assurance in renewed friendships over hot coffee and cinnamon rolls. Later I found contentment sitting with my sisters in the worship service and gained insights from the speaker. I found love in the sharing of the peace. I found my spirit welling up and spilling over with tears as we sang hymns of praise together.

But most important, God, I found you everywhere! In the hugs I received, in the music, in the Word, in the bread and wine. And when it was all over, I felt refreshed and renewed.

O, Lord, forgive me for being foolish with my plans and agenda. Thank you for the opportunities you give me to be in your presence and to know your love and will. Amen. ■
Sally Meyer is Mission: Growth chairperson for the Central/South Illinois synodical organization, Women of the ELCA and is a student inarian at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

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On the front cover

Lentils, green peas, black beans, Swedish brothy beans, wild rice, red kidney beans, black-eyed peas and Cajun red beans—these staple foods from around the globe are models of inclusivity. Each of these legumes and grains is beautiful and nutritious in its own right, but in combination they are enhanced and enriched.

Art and photos: Michael Lilja, front cover. Tom Boll, 4, 37, 41, 42; Baehr Design, 6-8, 10-11, 27-29; Fern Lee Hagedorn, Lutheran World Ministries, 12; John KaKayGeesick, 15; Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, 17; Eric Werner, 34-35; Don Pfister, 44-45; Krudo Design, 47, back cover.

LWT Wins Merit Awards

Lutheran Woman Today garnered two certificates of special merit in the Religious Public Relations Council 1989 DeRose/Linkhouse competition. "Come Eat Us Eat," the December 1988 poster design, won for illustration. "Growing and Sharing," a color poster promoting LWT, was recognized among posters and flyers submitted. An annual competition, the event this year drew over 280 entries from around the country. Over awards were given in categories ranging from feature writing to cable television.

LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

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Shown above is the logo for the Women of the ELCA First Triennial Convention, to be held July 12-15, 1990. For more information about the convention and its logo, see pages 46-47 in this issue.